2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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643 796 specially built for him. Here he should stay for about a month (Papit, the present king, stayed only four nights), spending much time in communion with Nyakang, giving many presents though receiving few, and abundantly exercising his right of amnesty.

[372] A ceremonial fire is made by friction, *ororo* and *kwareth* working together, from which brands are taken—by the *ororo* to start a fire in front of the hut in which the king is staying, by the *kwareth* for a fire in the centre of the village, and by commoners for a fire in a millet field near the king's hut. The purpose of these fires—we quote verbatim from Mr. Heasty's letter—is " to keep anyone from taking the king's life before he is crowned ". It is generally said that a brand from one of these fires is carried to Fashoda, but this is not so; Mr. Heasty discovered that the fire-sticks (one an old spear-handle) are carefully wrapped up and taken to Fashoda by the *ororo*, together with offerings of cattle. After the king has reached Fashoda all the fires in the village are put out; a cow is taken to the house of Nyakang as offering, together with the fire-sticks, and by means of the latter a new fire is kindled by the *ororo* and *kwareth*. [787] If this starts quickly it is a good omen and the king will live long; if the fire is long in kindling it is a sign that Nyakang is not well pleased with the new king and that his reign is likely to be short and troubled.

[492] The king-elect is escorted to Fashoda riding a black ox; on reaching the *khor* nearby he stops and awaits the arrival of the party from Akurwa, now swollen to a procession, who approach singing ancient sacred songs. From now on, until the entry to Fashoda, it becomes increasingly difficult to follow details of the ceremony. Mr. Munro's account is most valuable, and is printed as an Appendix, but he points out that the crowd was so dense that he could not see everything. Probably a black ox is sacrificed before the khor (about a quarter of a mile from Fashoda) is crossed, and it seems that there is something in the nature of a sham fight between the party surrounding the king-elect and the folk bringing the effigy of Nyakang from Akurwa. The khor is at last crossed, it being important that the king-elect should not wet his feet, and it appears that there is now a substantial fusion of the two parties—perhaps after a further scuffle. The king-elect, with " Nyakang " near to him, moves forward to Fashoda, and as he does so he treads successively on a sheep lying bound on the ground, on an ox, and in former days on an old man who had been caught by the *ororo* and kept bound and fasting for twenty-four

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

here articles of purchase and sale are calculated in silver currency.

The daily work of the women is cooking, carrying water, cleaning the house and yard, etc. During the time of farmwork they help the men in cultivating the fields.

FOOD

The staple food is dura. It is cooked, baked into a bread (*kogo*), roasted, brewed and, when green, eaten raw. For different kinds of food vide page 102. Their diet is rather monotonous, dura being its constant chief component. The dura is pounded and ground. The mortar is either a log of wood hollowed out, or a flat excavation in the ground, lined out with clay. The mill-stones — a large and a small one, with the latter the grinding is done — are secured from districts west of the Shilluk country. — Fire is made by twirling a hard stick on a soft piece of wood.

Besides dura they eat sesame, ducha, maize, beans, some onions, various grass seeds, the seeds of the lotus plant and of some kinds of nymphaeae. The fruit of several trees, as doleib, nabag, etc. also serve as food; they even rob ant hills to procure the winter store of hoarded seeds. White ants, when in the winged state, are a delicacy to them. — Milk is used in the household in many ways: it is drunk fresh, sour, or boiled, or dura meals are prepared with it. They also make butter, by shaking or rolling the milk in a gourd. — As domestic animals are almost never slain, meat forms no part of the daily food, but is rather an exceptional delicacy, which is, however, sought for with eagerness; of game they hardly leave any piece uneaten, skin and bowels not excepted; they do not even despise dead animals. The blood of killed animals is kept and cooked, but they do not tap the blood from living cattle, as is the custom with the Bari and Masai. — Generally they prefer the meat of castrated animals.

Two chief meals are taken daily; one from nine to ten in the morning, and the second at sunset.

BREWING OF BEER

A large quantity of the dura the people reap is used in cooking merisa or beer. The grain is put into jars and water poured on it. Thus it is left till the grain begins to sprout. Then it is spread in the sun to dry, and then pounded or ground; this wet meal is mixed with flour from the fresh grain and put a second time into jars which are filled with water. After stirring and mixing well, a little dry meal is sprinkled on it; the jars are covered with small mats and allowed to remain a day or two, until it begins to ferment, when a little more water and meal are added. When the whole mass is well fermented it is filtered through a grass funnel, and the following day is ready for use. It will keep about a week. Though this drink is slightly intoxicating, it does not seem to do great harm; it is very nourishing, and the natives regard it rather as a food than a beverage.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
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There were various dignitaries created *fagos* or chiefs responsible for separate small ceremonies. These had all to be appointed. They were old female *nyireths*, specially appointed, who looked after certain shrines of Nyikang. 643

An interesting ceremony was the lighting of the fire for the special blacksmiths, Kwanyikang from Golbainy, to make the sacred spears. It took place in the middle of January. A rough grass shelter was built on the clear ground east of Fashoda, and a white bull with brown markings was brought up for slaughter, and a black cow calf from the sacred herd of Nyikang. This was not for slaughtering, but was given to the Kwanyikang to take home. It and its offspring will remain the kine of Nyikang. A brown sheep is also brought. 643 782 [372 326]

Some little way off from the shelter the blacksmiths' implements, bellows, anvils, hammers etc., were brought out and laid upon a bull skin. When all was ready the implements were moved with great care to beside the shelter where they were laid out on the bull skin once more. Then the cow calf was completely draped in cloth, great care being taken to see that it was blind-folded. The bull calf and sheep were all tethered close to the shelter, and the spectators, including the *reth*, who took no part, stood round in a semicircle.

Two spears, sacred to Nyikang were brought down from the mound Aturwic, and a part of the sheep's right ear was cut off with one of the spears. This ear was said to assist the making of the fire. It was placed with some tinder upon a hearth beside the shelter, and the butt of a fish spear twirled and fire made. The sparks were fanned and taken into the shelter, where they were fanned into a fire. Then a piece was cut from the right ear of the bull, and put into a small gourd. A little bull's blood was also drained into the gourd. A blacksmith seized a hammer and hit the bull a blow on the base of the skull. The bull fell at once. Two more blows were delivered, and as it was about to die an incision was made in its throat with a spear, and the blood drawn off in gourds. The small gourd was said to be a libation to Nyikang, the large gourds full of blood were said [778] [372]

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
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643 [647] by a number of his wives carrying his personal luggage and his food, and with him also were some of his personal bodyguard. During his three days seclusion at Debalo, the *reth* is said to be in especial danger of attack by his rivals, and extra precautions are taken for his safety.

[372] We were told—but did not see at close quarters—that fires are ceremonially lit and that fire-sticks were used for this purpose. There are three possible explanations of this; that the fire is lit as a ritual act and as part of the initiation of the *reth*; the Shilluk expression *pic mac* suggests some form of symbolic purification or initiation, for it is an expression used in that context by other Nilotics; that fires were lit round the confines of the village as an added precaution against marauders; or merely numerous fires lit to cook the meat of sacrifice. [114] Both the latter explanations are suggested by Munro in his account of the instalation of *reth* Fafiti in 1917.

Whether the lighting of fires was a precautionary measure of security, a ritual act, or merely for purposes of feasting, the measures taken to safeguard the *reth* were manifest in other ways. A special homestead had been built for his reception in fine style with the eight cross-ties which are a symbol of royalty. It was situated in a particularly ostentatious position in the village of Debalo. But the *reth* did not occupy it. Instead, in order to deceive his enemies, he took up residence in a very ramshackle hut, which had no embellishments whatever.

643 776 The *reth's* stay at Debalo is not truly a period of seclusion. He has removed himself from all possible contact with Nyikang or his followers from the northern division of Gol Dhiang, but holds court among his own supporters, who flock in to pay homage from the division of Gol Nyikang. As yet we have formed no definite conclusions as to why the *reth* moves so hurriedly to Debalo as soon as Nyikang reaches Nyigir. Shilluk say that the *reth* has "fled" from Nyikang, and that he sends messengers to Nyikang beseeching him to stay away. It may be that this is considered a suitable sign of humility in accepting the office of *reth* of the Shilluk. Nyikang's attitude of arrogant

The same evening outside the shaine of Nyikang some of the Kwa Nyikwom were gathered and busily engaged in the spiritual decontamination of persons who had obstructed the passage of Nyikang on his march to Fashoda. These persons had incurred the displeasure of Nyikang, and were in grave danger of their lives, unless steps were taken by the Kwa Nyikwom to remove the curse by rites of purification. The two parties concerned were seated about two yards apart. Each had a potsherd filled with smouldering grass in front of him. The attendant member of the Kwa Nyikwom cut off about half an inch of the hippo whip he carried and burnt it in the embers. His victim them blew upon the embers, which burst into flame, but were extinguished with water. The ashes were removed and the victim anointed with them on the back, chest, palms and soles. For this privilege each handed over a chicken and a spear as a fine for a breach of traditional observance in hindering the path of Nyikang.

643 783 [372] [688]

The Making of New Fire at Fashoda.

Just before dusk a group of Ororo and Kwareth began to gather near one of the wind-screens at the side of the temporary camp. All fires in Fashoda had been extinguished. A wooden club of no special origin or sanctity was brought and the shaft of a spear detached from the blade. A small hole was pierced in the handle of the club, and the spearshaft sharpened to fit this hole. The ritual kindling of fire which followed was no different from the normal method of fire-making with sticks, except that several persons co-operated in twirling the shaft. One man held the club firmly to the ground, while each man twirled the shaft in turn, the hands of the second starting at the top of the shaft, as soon as the first man's hands had reached the middle. A continuous twirling motion was thus maintained. The tinder in the hole soon began to smoulder and grass was added and in a short time burst into flames. The fact that no difficulty had been encountered and that the fire had been kindled quickly was regarded as a good omen. Men and women who had been sitting nearby came up to light their pipes from the fire, and embers were carried off in all directions to relight the fires of Fashoda. The making

643 372 643 643 [787] [276]

[i.e., the day of the enthronement of the Reth. - Analyst]

Just before dawn they set up the four royal drums on end in holes specially dug in the ground[2] and in the centre of the village opposite the *kengo*. They were beaten for a short while as a signal that the public ceremonies of mourning would begin that day. In addition a fire was lit using fire sticks (*pic mac*), an important ritual item in any Shilluk ceremony, and a sheep was sacrificed.

I reached Kujo that afternoon just in time to see the *kwa* Nyikir enter the village again, singing as they came and carrying the spear of Nyikang wrapped in white cloth and also a basket which I was told contained certain sacred relics including the bell or Nyikang (*orok Nyikang*). The party stepped over a sheep held to the ground in front of them[1] and then took up their position round the drums.

Meanwhile an ox had been tethered near to the drums and a Shilluk warrior stood by, spear in hand. At a given signal he plunged his spear into the ox, missing the heart, and causing only a slight wound in the haunch, with the result that it broke away and had to be despatched outside the village. No particular attention was paid to this unfortunate incident which might have been regarded as an ill omen, and immediately the drums began to beat, the *kwa* Nyikir skipping round them four times and again stepping on to and over a sheep tethered to the ground. The main body of spectators consisting of important persons and the occupants of Kujo and neighbouring villages then entered the arena. These people carrying millet stalks, sticks and swords, but no spears, danced round the drums in an anti-clockwise direction singing the song of Nyikang followed by that of *reth* Dak Nyikang and finally a new song composed in honour of the deceased. After several minutes of dancing in this manner, the crowd moved forward and knelt facing the shrine clapping their hands as a sign of grief. These royal mourning songs reflect the Shilluks' attitude towards their kings. *Agwet wad Nyidhongo piny apath cie Yor wad Nyidhongo labo arieny*, "Agwet wad Nyidhongo, the earth is

[2] These holes are specially dug beforehand and bells and other sacred objects put beneath the drums. For normal social events Shilluk drums are laid horizontally or lean against supports set in the ground.

[1] The significance of this act is not clear and Shilluk merely say that it must be done; it is "according to custom," *kwong*. I have, however, frequently heard it said that the act, *akodh*, is intended to remove impurities which might be harmful to the *reth*. The procedure is followed in all sorts of ritual situations in which the *reth* is concerned. It will be remembered that the *reth* steps over a bull-calf when he leaves Debalo and over a black bull at Arepejur on his way to Fashoda on the first day of the installation ceremonies. It will also be remembered that in the old days, prior to *reth* Fadiet, a man (and a girl) was subjected to the same treatment as the bulls and sheep, and, though it is not true that he invariably died in the process, he was never allowed to come into direct contact with the *reth*. See Howell and Thomson, *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 54 and p. 79, Note 21.

24: Howell E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

4. *jago* Aturwel (Fadit Division)
5. *kwanyireth* Akwei (Detwok Division)
6. *jago* Ongwany (Muomo Division)
7. *jago* Olwak (Fanyidwai Division)
8. *kwanyireth* Dhikwan (Nyijok Division)
9. *kwanyireth* Yomon (Lul Division)
10. *kwanyireth* Geny (Malakal Division)[5]

I informed them of three candidates who on various grounds were unacceptable to the Government and left them. On the night of the 13th matters were hastened because *nyireth* Kur was summoned by the Electoral College and marched with his followers to Akwabai to await daylight and formal acceptance. I arrived at 7.30 a.m. on the morning of the 14th and found the new *reth* already in Fashoda which he had entered after stepping over a sheep tethered to the ground[6]. I waited for two hours while certain ritual (*kwer*) was performed, including the making of new fire by rubbing fire-sticks together (*pic mac*), water boiled over the fire and used for the shaving of the *reth's* head. The chiefs—a very large cross-section of Shilluk society, for only *kwanyireth* Deng of Apac, and the chiefs of Tonga and Fanyikang had not arrived—together with the men of Kodok and others present shouted their allegiance and a black ox (no entire animal could be found) was speared, stood looking dazed for about five minutes and then fell on its left side (a good omen) just by the royal cattle byre. The chiefs dispersed on the 15th, leaving the *reth* to contemplate for a few days in his father's home, while Fashoda was being organised to house a new *reth* after being deserted for several weeks owing to *reth* Dak's absence in hospital."

Mr. Baker has also remarked that in the list of chiefs given above, only the first three are essential at this meeting. "The others are truly only witnesses or at most proposers of candidates." Thomson, speaking of the election of *reth* Dak, says "it was clearer to me than before that the choice rests entirely with the chiefs of Gol Dhiang and Gol Nyikang[7]." "I doubt whether even the chief of the *kwareth* (*jago jang kwareth*) has any influence: he and the other members of the College have only to listen to a decision."[8]

I had not the time to attend all the events or to investigate all the aspects of the preparations which led up to the installation on this occasion. Mr. Thomson and I between us had been able to cover much of the ground on the accession of *reth* Anei. Mr. Thomson was able to add further details on the installation of *reth* Dak. It must be remembered, however, that the death of one *reth* and the installation of another takes not less than a year to complete and that the ceremonies are set over a wide field from one end of Shilluk

[5] See Howell & Thomson, *op. cit.* p. 31-33.

[6] The significance of this act (*akadh*) is discussed in a previous article: S.N.R. Vol. 33 Part I.

[7] Howell & Thomson, *ibid*, p. 75.

[8] Thomson, *op. cit.* p. 152.

574 like bellows, and then passes it on. Pipe and beer circulate
[276] freely, and under the mellowing influence of both, tongues are quickly loosened and conversation turns to the perennial
[521] topic of cattle. After a while, your cigarette finished, you will excuse yourself to your host and, rising from your cramped position, greet everyone present in turn and make your escape into the open air.

512 The Shilluk, sensible man, starts his day with the sun. He emerges from his hut, however, with heavy head and blood-
[513] shot eyes, since he has been sleeping for seven or eight hours in a small windowless hut with the doorway blocked with a
[372] heavy grass mat and perhaps a smoky fire burning as a
825 protection against mosquitoes. As a further defence against
[751] these pests he covers himself from head to foot with the red ashes from the cow-dung fire, but this does not worry him; if there is water handy he may rinse his hands and face,
[515] if not, he will remain as he is until his next visit to the river —perhaps today, perhaps tomorrow or the next day—gives him the chance of taking a bath.

Gradually the village comes to life: the women appear, winding their drab-looking cloths round them, and set off
[484] on their daily pilgrimage to the river with the heavy water pots balanced on their heads. The little group breaks up and the women fall into line, one behind the other, as they reach the narrow track leading out of the village, chattering like starlings as they swing along. The boys come out of the
512 byre smothered like their elders in the red ashes in which
857 they have been lying all night, looking like imps from the
[233] lower regions. They begin to clean up round the tethered
372 cattle, collecting the cow dung and spreading it out to
234 dry in the sun for fuel. When this is done they milk the cows and goats. From one compound comes the sound
[252] of dull thumping as some girl pounds the millet grain into coarse flour. The grain is small and hard, red or white in colour. It is first winnowed by being poured at shoulder height from a basket and then sieved in a boat-
[415] shaped scoop of plaited fibre. The grain is then put into a

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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king must not be 'hot' or 'cold' with his subjects, but just.

During the rest of the day the king remains in the seclusion of his temporary camp. Towards evening all fires are extinguished and new fire is made by twisting a sharpened stick in a hole made in another stick. The smouldering tinder is fanned into a bright flame, and the sacred fire is carried off to light the fires in the village.

During the next two days the reth remains in seclusion and certain secret rites are performed. On the evening of the second day he leaves his temporary camp and takes up his residence in a hut on an eminence called Aturwic, just outside Fashoda. He is traditionally 'enticed' there by a girl, and for the first time since the commencement of the ceremonies he deserts his young 'bride' who remains behind in the camp. The next morning the king remembers his bride and asks for her. He is told that she cannot be found and he sends messengers to look for her. They return and say that during the night Nyikang has come and carried her off. The king then sends to Nyikang demanding the return of the girl, but Nyikang flies into a rage and calls his army together to punish this impertinence. Nyikang and Dak now appear outside the shrine where they have lain since the morning of the installation and are joined by a third effigy, Nyikang's second son Col, who is composed of grey ostrich feathers and rope. The three effigies surrounded by their followers now aroused to a pitch of excitement by continuous drumming and dancing, advance towards Aturwic and the king and his *entourage* descend from the mount to meet the aggressors. The king advances boldly towards his opponents and hurls his millet stalk 'spear', which is a signal for a general onrush by his supporters. This time it is Nyikang who is vanquished. The 'bride' is snatched away from him and hurried up the mount to safety and in vain do the warriors of Nyikang counter-attack to recover her. At length they fight their way to the foot of the mound but then Nyikang calls a truce and quietly ascends the eminence accompanied by his sons. Apparently all is settled amicably. The reth has proved